262

greyish color and are usually very fibrous. Boiled camotes stuck on small bamboo sticks are often sold in Siaton's marketplace and small stores.

Cassava

241

The so-called native cassava (balanghoy) was brought to the Philippines from Mexico during the early days of the Spanish regime. Varieties of cassava with commercial possibilities were not introduced into the Philippines until the American period. In some localities, like the Sulu archipelago, cassava is the staple food; in Siaton, however it is merely a supplementary seasonal food. The plant is cultivated by Filipinos for the tubers which store from 15 to 40 per cent starch. [146]

Only 32 acres of cassava were planted in Siaton municipality in 1951; very little was grown in Caticugan. [311] While three types of cassava are known and planted in the area--Visaya, Java and Australia--most of the cassava in Caticugan is Visaya. The Visaya variety grown in Caticugan may be Mandioca Sao Pedro Preto. The barriofolk report that Visaya cassava tastes better than the Java variety and contains more starch. [262] Australia cassava is reported to be grown mainly in Nasi-id and Bantolinao, sitios of Caticugan. Visaya cassava takes from ten to twelve months to mature, although the barriofolk of Caticugan dig immature roots after six months.

Two small patches planted solely to cassava in Caticugan were both in Naga. These patches were too

March and April, tangkong sells for more than when a larger supply of kalamongay and other vegetables are for sale in the marketplace. When the price is high a small bunch of tangkong sells for five centavos (two and a half cents). When other vegetables are available one may buy three bunches of tangkong for that price.

Sometimes people will come to Barrio Caticugan from the poblacion or nearby barrios to buy tangkong. If they pick the vegetable they are given a cheaper price than if they purchase it from the owner. Normally the owners take their tangkong to the poblacion to sell; but three women and one man sold tangkong from their patches in Barrio Caticugan; the male vendor was a bayute. Vendors do not have much trouble selling tangkong, especially during the hot season when most vegetables are scarce. Tangkong is a good source of vitamins B and C and an excellent source of vitamin C; the leaves are said to have a mild purgative effect.[74]

Owners of tangkong patches sometimes let other vendors sell their greens in the poblacion and split the profits. This is done when the woman owning the tangkong cannot take her vegetables to the market. For example, one young mother, with a new baby, was unable to take her tangkong to the poblacion. She made an arrangement with a neighbor to sell her greens; the owner received a net

---

[74] Brown, op. cit., III, p. 258.

CHAPTER VI

HUNTING AND FOOD GATHERING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the hunting and food gathering activities in Catiengan.[1] The largest and most frequently hunted animal is the wild pig. Plants gathered are edible wild tubers, mushrooms, a few vegetables and various fruits. Some people trap pigeons, quail, doves and other wild birds. In emergencies the pith of several varieties of palms is processed into an edible flour. 22

Since most of the barriofolk exist at a dietary level which seems barely adequate, the food obtained by hunting and gathering, though usually small in amount, is relatively important. Between the harvests of the wet and dry season corn--the "starvation months"--most barriofolk spend more time gathering wild plants than in any other season. When the first corn harvest begins, the gathering activities decrease. The wild plants and tubers [511] [146]

[1] Gathering of aquatic snails and mollusks is included in Chapter VII, SECURING AQUATIC PRODUCTS.

It is a frequent saingin volunteer and one could see plants growing in poblacion vacant lots. Igao has been studied so there is some information on its nutritional value.[11] The igao's petioles are boiled and fed to the pigs (but never eaten by the people in Caticugan) while the corms are gathered for food.

All wild corms are dug during the dry or hot season. When the rainy season appears the roots become very fibrous and less agreeable to eat. It is fortunate for the barriofolk that the corms are most palatable during the period when they are most needed. With the coming of the rains the igao leafs out and the corms turn black. They may still be dug to feed to pigs but this is not a common practice in Caticugan. Barriofolk regard the corms as most palatable in March and April.

Both men and women dig for wild roots. However, when the roots are shallow and easily dug, women and children normally dig them. If the vines are very thorny

---

[11] Brown, op. cit., I, p. 344. The Tagalog name for igao is puñgapung. R. F. Bacon, "Starch Production in the Philippines," Phil. Journal of Science, A 3 (1908), states the highest yield of starch obtainable from the igao corms is 4.5 per cent; this study cited in Brown, ibid. More recent studies by Wester and Hermano give the following data on the constituents of the igao corm: moisture 77.8 (74.8) per cent; ash 1.3 (0.7); fat 0.13 (0.6); protein 1.4 (5.1); and giving 574 (1,000) calories per 2.2 pounds. Hermano's study is cited in Brown, op. cit., I, pp. 344-348. Hermano's figures are enclosed in (). P. J. Wester, The Food Plants of the Philippines. 3rd revised edition. Manila, Bureau of Agriculture Bulletin No. 39, Bureau of Printing, 1925, p. 218.

paddies) and a few use the leaves of the dapdap (Erythrina variegata L. var. orientalis (L.) Merr.) tree as greens. 222 262 Sometimes the blossoms of wild bananas are gathered, boiled, and eaten.

MUSHROOMS

Wild mushrooms, though not very plentiful, are gathered by the barriofolk. Most people are fond of mushrooms, and consider them a delicacy. Individuals rarely make special searches for mushrooms; they watch for them when traveling in the mountains. Mushrooms are usually collected during the rainy season; they are found growing in bamboo groves, on dead logs, rotting banana or abaca stalks (often in caingins) and other shady places.[14] 222

Eleven different types of edible mushrooms (obong) are gathered by the barriofolk: amamakol, libgos, kolmidop, layat, saha-an, kotmava, obong (a poisonous type is also known by the same name), talope, tangogtangog, layslays and songadsongad. The most common varieties that grow near Caticugan

[14] Few cases of fatal mushroom poisoning occur in the Philippines since the poisonous species rarely grow in the lowlands; they thrive best in cool places in the mountains. "It is a common belief in the Philippines that thunder and lightning have something to do with the spontaneous appearance of mushrooms. When thunder begins to rumble, especially during May or early June, at the start of the rainy season, young and old in rural communities rush out to the open fields and meadows to search for mushrooms." The general name for edible mushrooms in Tagalog is kabute, in Negros and Panay, obong, and Leyte ulaping. Jose M. Mendoza, "Philippine Mushrooms." The Philippines Journal of Science, LXV, Nos. 1-2, (January-February, 1938), pp. 13-15. My collection of mushrooms for identification spoiled: for this reason the English or scientific names are not given. Mendoza's study did not list the Cebuano names for these mushrooms. [511] [146]

are libgos, kolakdop, layat and tangogtangog. Amamakol is said to be available throughout the year while the layat, songadsongad and lavalava are gathered mostly in May and June. 222

Sometimes a lucky person finds a lot of mushrooms and sells them in the marketplace; they are quickly purchased. One day a young man came to Siaton poblacion with a half a gunny sack of libgos that he sold for five cents a hatful. Mushrooms are normally sliced and mixed with vegetables or fried in lard. 438 [435] 252

WILD FRUITS

Certain wild fruits are eaten in season. One popular fruit, somewhat similar to a cherry, is the lumboy (Tag: duhat; Syzygium cumini (Linn.) Skeels).[15] Lumboys ripen in April and May; children often gather large quantities and sell them in the poblacion. In Sitio Katogasan (Barrio Datag), lumboy trees are said to be very plentiful. 222

Wild guavas (bayabas) are fairly plentiful in Caticugan; they occur mostly in the nearby hills.[16]

---

[15] An analysis of the mineral content and food value of fresh and oven-dried lumboy samples has been made. The analyses indicate that lumboy is a good source of calcium and fair in iron. Brown, op. cit., III, pp. 156-9. [146]

[16] Guavas are one of the commonest and best known fruits in the Philippines, a native of tropical America that has become thoroughly naturalized. Brown, op. cit., III, pp. 152-3.

one in the barrio owned a boat. One man had a partnership with a resident of a seaside barrio; the former made the bobo, the latter furnished the boat and they shared the catch equally. This was the only such partnership discovered in Caticugan. The barriofolk of Caticugan depend largely on products of the creek and river for their proteins. Data of diet indicate that pelagic products are not common in the daily diet. The small fish, eels, shrimp, crabs and snails obtained from the creek and river compose the bulk of aquatic foods eaten in Caticugan. The importance of this source of food for rural Filipinos has been overlooked almost entirely.[75]

226
433
471

262
146

As with agricultural and food-gathering activities, pre-Hispanic animism appears in aquatic techniques. The ceremonies related to the construction of boats, fish corrals and the rituals connected with the installation of these devices, reflect deep-rooted beliefs in unseen spirits who are the titular owners of sea products. While some poblacion residents who finance fish corrals are sceptical of these concepts, they usually are tolerant of their workers' attitudes. Perhaps these more sophisticated individuals, not thoroughly convinced of the falsity of these beliefs, take the attitude that "most superstitious practices do no harm and may do some good," a Cebuano saying. These attitudes and customs associated with securing

226
781

---

[75] The Rivera-McMillan report includes several pages of "typical menus of rural households" (Appendix C) that make no mention of fresh-water shrimp or snails. However, one picture is included (p. 162) that shows a small family eating "rice, small shrimp, and snail for supper." The lack of this information in the typical menus may be due to the barriofolk's hesitation to admit eating snails. Rivera-McMillan, op. cit., pp. 212-3.